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Geoffrey de Mandeville. A Study of the Anarchy. By J. H. ROUND. London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1892.—8vo, xii, 461 pp.

Under this title we should scarcely expect to find an important contribution to the constitutional history of mediæval England. Mr. Round, however, is not merely an original investigator of the first rank, but he also avoids the beaten track in his method of treatment. Throughout this volume the biographical detail is wholly subordinated to the political and constitutional development of Stephen's reign. The basis of his narrative is the career of Geoffrey de Mandeville, "the most perfect and typical presentment of the feudal and anarchic spirit that stamps the reign of Stephen." Mr. Round believes that by fixing our glance upon this one man, and by tracing his policy and its fruits, "it is possible to gain a clearer perception of the true tendencies at work, and to obtain a firmer grasp of the essential principles involved." I do not regard this as an ideal method of treatment, because, even in such strong hands as Mr. Round's, it is apt to be discursive and to lack real unity.

The thread around which the narrative is woven is the self-seeking policy of Geoffrey de Mandeville. He had charge of the Tower of London, and his authority was so great that he almost held the balance of power in the conflict between Stephen and the Empress Maud. In 1140 the king tried to secure his adhesion by making him Earl of Essex. This is the only known charter by which Stephen created an earldom, and it is the earliest known creation of a peerage. The next year, while the king was in captivity, Maud won Geoffrey over to her side by outbidding Stephen; her charter makes the earl hereditary sheriff of Essex as well as "*capitalis justicia in Essexia*," and it also contains an important grant of lands.

In his discussion of the term "*capitalis justicia*" it is difficult to follow Mr. Round, because at first he speaks as though it implied jurisdiction in the county court of Essex, but at the end of the chapter the reader carries away the impression that jurisdiction in Geoffrey's feudal courts is meant. Our confusion is increased by the apparent attempt that is made in another place (bottom of page 373) to connect Geoffrey's judicial office with London. Moreover, the comparison between his position in the county and that of the "justices" in towns seems untenable, especially when we consider that what Mr. Round calls the "typical charters" of London and Colchester (page 109) are not at all typical, but, as far as the use of

the term *justicia* or *justiciarius* is concerned, quite exceptional or abnormal. Mr. Round says that the town "justice" had feudal or anti-royal functions similar to those conferred upon Geoffrey; but, by the author's own admission, the Colchester *justicia* corresponds to the later coroner, who was preëminently a royal anti-feudal agent. Moreover, the early municipal records indicate that even the most privileged towns were not exempt from the interference of royal justices during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. What, it may finally be asked, could be the duties of a "localized" justice in London at a time when, as Mr. Round himself contends (page 356), that city had no "communal" government or corporate unity? The view which I have elsewhere expressed, that the *justiciarii* or *justiciarii* of London and Colchester were coroners, still seems to me to be tenable, though I admit that this may be demonstrated more clearly in the case of Colchester than in that of London. It may be added that, in connection with the new documents printed in this chapter, the author fails to call attention to the existence of the eyre in Stephen's reign, which those documents (page 111) seem to reveal. This fact would strengthen his contention on pages 100, 154, that the machinery of central government, though crippled, was not in complete abeyance.

When the tide began to turn against the empress, Geoffrey sold his support to the queen, who offered him better terms than Maud had granted, and in the latter part of 1141 these new concessions were confirmed by Stephen's second charter to Geoffrey. But even then the treacherous earl was not satisfied. He seems to have aspired to the rôle of king-maker, and in 1142 a higher bid from the empress induced him once more to cast off his allegiance to Stephen. The second charter of Maud gave him an additional grant of lands. This was Geoffrey's last move in the deep and perilous game that he was playing, and it caused his ruin. His treason was soon discovered, and he was obliged to surrender his castles to the king. Toward the close of 1143 he headed a revolt against the crown and fled to the fen-lands of Cambridgeshire. Here he was guilty of fiendish oppressions, typical of this period of anarchy, "when every lord had his castle, and every castle was a robber's nest." While besieging Burwell in August or September, 1144, the great earl was killed by the arrow of a humble churl. Mr. Round should have made the year of his hero's death clearer. In a final chapter the history of Geoffrey's descendants is given. Then follows an appendix almost equal in bulk to the body of the work.

The above outline very imperfectly represents the contents of Mr. Round's book. Incidentally he throws new light on various problems of constitutional interest, such as the title to the English crown, the ceremony of coronation at Westminster, the origin and nature of earldoms, the development of the fiscal system, the administration of London and the early history of castles. He has also done much to straighten the chronology of Stephen's reign, and to vindicate that king against some of the charges of incapacity or weakness which have been brought against him.

The peculiarity of his method of investigation is his critical use of charters to illustrate both narrative and constitutional history. His views regarding the value of this kind of evidence recalls what Seyer says in the preface of his *Charters of Bristol* (1812):

In tracing the history of the English nation . . . old chronicles must be perused, and above all, laws and records; one day thus spent will give more insight into the manners, the character and opinions, as well as the transactions, of a distant age, than thrice the time employed in reading the best history of England.

In like manner Mr. Round emphasizes "the chronicle-value of charters," *i.e.* their importance in supplementing the information given by contemporary historians. What he has accomplished ought, as he hopes, to "encourage the study of charters and their evidence," especially in connection with periods of which our knowledge is scanty owing to the paucity of the ordinary sources. It is certain that a vast amount of political, legal and constitutional history lies buried in charters granted to nobles, municipalities and religious houses.

Some may find fault with the author's severe criticism of Mr. Freeman, Mr. Loftie, Mr. Birch and others. Perhaps his language is now and then somewhat harsh, and he may be too much inclined to drift into polemical excursions. But I thoroughly agree with what he says on the subject in his preface:

It is easier to prophesy smooth things and to accept without question the errors of others, in the spirit of mutual admiration . . . If my criticism be deemed harsh, I may plead with Newman, that, in controversy, I have ever felt from experience that no one would believe me to be in earnest if I spoke calmly.

The English public is so conservative that a half-hearted expression of disagreement with "the leading authorities" fails to carry conviction or to dislodge error. To counteract the excessive veneration of

authority which is characteristic of the English nation, a writer must use plain and at times even strong language, or his words will not be heeded. Investigators of English history will, let us hope, continue to seek the truth and freely state it, even though certain English critics may continue to sneer at Dryasdust treatises, and to be shocked that any one dare refuse to accept all the dicta of Professor Freeman or Dr. Stubbs. In spite of such critics, scholars will rejoice at Mr. Round's valuable additions to the sum of historical knowledge, and will be pleased at the true spirit of independent research which characterizes his work.

CHARLES GROSS.

Lancaster and York. By SIR JAMES H. RAMSAY. Two Volumes. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1892. — xlviii, 498 ; xxxiii, 559 pp.

The purpose of the author of this work, as he states in the preface, is "to supply a verified connected narrative of the first 1500 years of the history of England"; and he adds: "The book has been composed to serve no special theory or object, save that of bringing the reader as far as possible face to face with facts." For reasons that are not specified the author has published the last portion of his work first. Sir James H. Ramsay's objections to a purely constitutional history are, that the "writer is somewhat cramped by the necessity of regarding all things from the constitutional point of view, nor can he, without transgressing the proper limits of his subject, do justice to all sides of the national story." The preface seems to promise a history of England, viewed from the political, social, economic and constitutional standpoints. We are led to expect a work conceived on the broad lines of Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, but disappointment awaits us.

The author has consulted all the available original authorities, both the records and the contemporary historians. He has carefully collated his facts, and has given us a connected narrative of England's history from the reign of the unfortunate Richard II (1399) to the Battle of Bosworth Field (1485). The facts are stated clearly, full details are given of parliaments, of convocations, of foreign affairs, of military campaigns, of treaties and of truces. As an example of his minute methods of working, the following passage (vol. ii, p. 3) may be cited :